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ONTARIO COUNCIL ON UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS

Government
Publications

OPEN MEETING WITH STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 12, 1975

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

ONTARIO COUNCIL ON UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS

MINUTES

5-0029 MEETING

OPEN MEETING WITH STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

LOCATION

Queen's Park, Toronto

DATE AND TIME

April 12, 1975
9:45 a.m.

5-0030 ATTENDANCE

OCUA MEMBERS

J. S. Dupré

W. E. Bagnall

A. L. McCallion

M. A. B. Bush

J. F. Mustard

A. D. D'Iorio

M. F. Orange

P. D. Fleck

R. P. Riggin

J. D. Fisher

Ronald S. Ritchie

R. Gerstein

H. H. Walker

T. R. Léger

OCUA STAFF

J. P. Venton
Executive Secretary

N. E. Simmons
Associate Secretary

MCU(Observer)

B. A. Wilson
Assistant Deputy Minister

STUDENT DELEGATION

B. Cameron
Chairperson
Ontario Federation of
Students

S. Roberts
Executive Member
Ontario Federation of
Students

F. McIntyre
President Graduate Students Union
University of Toronto

D. Leckie
Coordinator, GSU
University of Toronto

D. Martin
Field Worker
Ontario Federation of Students

D. Lewis
Researcher, Ontario Federation
of Students

B. Buckingham
General Secretary
National Union of Students

J. Shortall
President
Federation of Students
University of Waterloo

5-0031 INTRODUCTION

Council received and read the Ontario Federation of Students brief which was followed by Mr. McIntyre's reading of the submission from the Commission on Graduate Education. In addition to matters dealt with in depth in the briefs, subsequent discussion focused on the following:

5-0032 BACKGROUND ON THE ONTARIO FEDERATION OF STUDENTS (OFS)

Membership in OFS, it was learned was predicated on popular votes held on each campus, and funding of the Federation came from individual student fees specifically ear-marked for this purpose. The points of view expressed in the OFS brief had resulted from plenary-type discussion involving representatives from the majority of member universities.

5-0033 MANPOWER AND EDUCATION POLICY

The delegation classified any move toward elimination of foreign students a "racist reaction to fiscal stringency" and favoured recognition of Canada's international responsibility to train foreign students who would then be able to return to assist in development of their native lands. Simultaneously the delegation stressed that universities should receive adequate funding to train enough Canadians to fill our future manpower needs and that the current immigration policy allowed Government to assume that a large part of our needed manpower would continue to come from foreign countries. Major emphasis was placed on the need for an educational policy geared to a continuing economically developing province.

5-0034 SYSTEM ACCOUNTABILITY

A far ranging discussion ensued concerning various aspects of system accountability. With respect to the OFS stand on open budgeting the delegation elaborated that in its opinion the Government had suggested that the universities had done a poor job of allocating funds and that rather than changing the structure of budgeting, the Government

now reproached universities by reducing funds across the board. The students wished to see taxpayers involved in, and exposed directly to development of university policy and expenditure objectives, and, the budgeting process which determined programme priorities and university emphases.

The delegation felt strongly that the only way to achieve rational planning of resource allocations and to maintain autonomy would be to open the decision making process both to the university community and to the general public. The resultant system it was felt would be more representative and more efficient. Community involvement was seen to be particularly crucial in Northern Ontario where the public felt that most of their tax dollars and young people go to Southern Ontario. The delegation was strongly in favour of broad dialogue on the definition of "community" for purposes of university decision making involvement. It was also felt that university autonomy must be subject to the constraints imposed by clear public policy.

ACAP was seen by the delegation as an "elitist COU attempt to out-wit the Government". However, the delegation did recognize the need for some kind of university coordination in this area.

With respect to a reference to parity in the OFS brief the delegation elaborated that student parity should be confined to internal university decision making and that the student segment of a parity balance would include all types of students. Council noted that part-time students normally would play a dual role in such a situation both as students and as members of the working public.

5-0035 ADMISSIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY

The delegation saw a strong need for a guaranteed level of support which would allow accessibility to lower income groups and felt that increased community involvement in university affairs would ensure

that questions of this nature came into the open. A reintroduction of Grade XIII Departmental examinations would not receive student support in that it was felt such a mechanism would discriminate against creative people and place heavy reliance on the high school system as an indicator of an individual's potential for university work. The delegation felt that the Government had used fiscal restraint to determine rationalization of admission standards and that this approach had led to confusion within the university community. It was felt that investigation of the purpose of post-secondary education was required.

5-0036

THE STRUCTURING AND FUNDING OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

The delegation felt that traditional undergraduate education models were too constrictive and that more flexibility in the form of seminar programmes and independent studies were needed. Each of the three university stages (i.e. undergraduate, master and doctoral) should be structured in such a way to be both self-sufficient as a stop-off point, and a stepping stone to the next higher level.

The delegation stressed that current social problems did not seem to be serviced by adequate knowledge. It was felt that the Government preferred funding social services in view of the obvious immediate returns on such an investment. The students cautioned however that cutting back educational support in the present can only exacerbate current and future global problems. The delegation feared that system-wide cut backs would result in maintenance of traditional emphases in universities and elimination of relevant and socially supportive programmes. In this regard specific government grants were requested to support research and development programmes relevant to current and future needs.

The students felt that Provincial revenues should be increased and directed more towards education. The need for a long term

plan for universities was stressed in that the economic future of the Province was dependent on support of the universities now.

5-0037

TUITION FEES

The delegation did not see Government control of tuition fees as the first step toward their abolition and felt that the Government ultimately should give universities enough ear-marked funds to remove the requirement for revenues thus generated, but that legally the prerogative to set fees should be left with the Board of each university.

5-0038

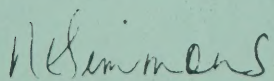
OFS RECOMMENDATIONS

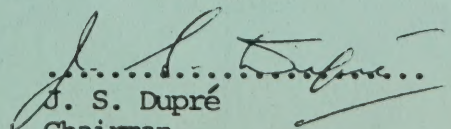
In the discussion of recommendations contained in the OFS brief Council learned that recommendations 3 & 4 had not been costed by OFS and that these did imply increased taxation to be phased in over the next few years. A comprehensive paper dealing with the taxation implications of recommendation #5 would be forwarded to Council by OFS when completed. The delegation noted that their recommendations addressed the current situation in university education and recognized that their implementation would have far reaching implications which would only come to light in the future. The research and study of such consequences would receive the continuing effort of OFS.

5-0039

ONTARIO GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

The delegation estimated the current support of Humanities and Social Sciences from OGSP to amount to approximately 71%. However, it was recommended that whatever the mechanism, funding to that sector be increased, and research support be solicited from industry.


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N. E. Simmons
Associate Secretary


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J. S. Dupré
Chairman

